



West Virginia Veterans Council
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 14, 2015

- The meeting opened at 12:00 pm in the Governor's Conference Room at the West Virginia State Capitol.
- Meeting called to order by Chairman Bare.
- Six members were present, enough to establish a quorum.
- Those present were: Randall Bare, James DeCarlo, Cedric Greene, Bill Harris, Harrison Gilliam, and Miles Epling. Not present: Woody Williams and Mary Byrd. James McCormick arrived about midway through the meeting.
- Miles Epling motioned to dispense with the reading of the minutes. Motion seconded by Bill Harris. **Motion passed.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Lottery Letter

- Bill Harris inquired about a response to Jesse Bane's letter alleging faux fraternal organizations were using lottery machines and revenue inappropriately.
- Secretary Thompson provided members with documents from the WV Lottery detailing their investigation of those allegations.

NEW BUSINESS:

Veteran Unemployment & Mental Illness

- Chairman Randall Bare initiated conversation about need for improved relationships with VA hospitals so veterans with mental illness can receive appropriate treatment and find employment.
- Secretary Thompson offered to log information reported to us about veterans who are overmedicated so we can pass information along to Congressional Delegation and federal VA.

Guard Members Tricare

- Chairman Bare reported that certain National Guard members are having trouble obtaining Tricare benefits.

- Harrison Gilliam explained that not all Guard members qualify. Lack of communication is the problem.

Meeting Locations & Dates

- Harrison Gilliam suggested holding Council meetings in different locations to improve communications.
- Chairman Bare would like to hold at least one meeting next fiscal year at the Huntington VA Medical Center.
- Secretary Thompson's office will arrange for a meeting in Huntington and will continue to schedule meetings for the second Tuesday of each quarter. Dates will be posted on WVDVA web site.

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Rick Thompson):

Cemetery Information

- Cemetery information including National regulations regarding committal shelters has been included in Council packets again in response to inquiries from Woody Williams.

Workforce Planning Council

- Governor Tomblin is now including the WVDVA on his Workforce Planning Council.

West Virginia Veterans Nursing Facility

- The census is down at the moment.
- A new elopement prevention system is being installed. Once complete, we can again accept residents who are at risk of elopement.
- New marketing strategies are in place to help increase census.

Veterans Home

- Census is up to around 90, thanks to transitional unit.

Donel C. Kinnard Memorial State Veterans Cemetery:

- WVDVA wants to have the Don Kinnard Memorial unveiled as soon as possible. People are starting to complain about it being covered.
- Chairman Bare said the VFW wants to hold the unveiling during their convention, which will be sometime around June 18.
- Secretary Thompson asked that they please work with us on that.

Legislative Recap

- WVDVA budget was good, about the same as last year.
- Fireworks bill failed after Senate manipulation.
- Secretary of State's Boots to Business bill passed as did the doctor licensure bill for nursing facility.
- Secretary Thompson expressed concern about the delayed communications from legislature regarding their agendas.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Bill Harris suggested holding a Council meeting in Wheeling.
- James McCormick discussed SB 469 as it regards the Veterans to Agriculture program. The program budget is now limited to \$7,500 per year.
- James McCormick promoted a tree planting to be held in Fairmont on April 25 for veterans killed in action during War on Terror.
- James DeCarlo motioned to adjourn the meeting.
- Seconded by Harrison Gilliam. **Meeting adjourned** at 1:00 pm.

Heather Ransom
Communications Director

Rick Thompson
Cabinet Secretary